

# LINCOLN

## IN CARTOON AND CARICATURE



Cartoonists are seldom kind to political opponents. Here a Southern sympathizer portrays Lincoln as the "Federal Phoenix" gaining life from the ashes of the Constitution and other presumably destroyed rights.



## A JOB FOR THE NEW CABINETMAKER

Lincoln's election in 1860 led to a breach between Northern and Southern states that resulted in secession even before he was inaugurated in 1861. This cartoon shows the President-elect in the position of a man trying to seal the split with "Union Glue." Although the fact probably was unknown to the cartoonist, Lincoln was familiar with the cabinetmaker's art because it had been one of his father's trades.



OLD ABE: "Oh, it's all well enough to say that I must support the dignity of my high office by force — but it's darned uncomfortable sitting, I can tell yer." After he was elected in 1860 and before he took office, the still unbearded Lincoln received this undignified treatment. Although the portrayal of Lincoln emphasizes his homely and unsophisticated qualities, it also shows the dilemma of the President-elect as the nation faced the threat of war.

A black and white caricature of a man with a large nose and a mustache. He is wearing a dark sweater with "UNION CLUB" written across the chest, dark trousers, and a bow tie. He is holding a cane in his right hand. The drawing is signed "J. H. H." in the bottom left corner.

A political cartoon of a man in a plaid shirt and suspenders, holding a baseball bat and a ball, with a speech bubble saying "a home run". The man is standing on a patch of ground, and the bat has the words "THE NEW YORK TIMES" written on it.

In this Currier & Ives poster for the election of 1860, Lincoln "The Railsplitter" is shown defeating the other three Presidential candidates, Bell, Douglas, and Breckinridge. The candidates are probably playing "one old cat" or "town ball," one of the predecessors of baseball, and the "National Game" referred to in the caption is politics. It is often said that baseball made great strides toward earning the title of "national game" when it was played extensively by troops during the war which followed Lincoln's election.



AS THE NORTH RECEIVED IT



AS THE SOUTH RECEIVED IT

This double view of Lincoln's Inaugural Address in 1861 was drawn by Thomas Nast and is generally considered his first political cartoon. Earlier, he had been a news illustrator (like a news photographer today), but during and after the Civil War he achieved renown as perhaps the finest cartoonist in the United States.

### LINCOLN IN CARTOON AND CARICATURE

The art of cartooning and caricature was scarcely new when Abraham Lincoln first claimed national attention. Printed posters featuring exaggerated drawings had become devices of political satire in the eighteenth century, and cartoons had begun to appear in magazines as early as the 1840s. Lincoln's physical appearance and frontier background made him a cartoonist's delight. He was tall, homely, frequently uncombed, and generally unsophisticated in dress. His youthful employment as a railsplitter was widely publicized, and he was sometimes characterized as a rustic teller of tall stories with a decidedly middlewestern dialect. Starting with his rise to prominence in connection with the election of 1860, Lincoln cartoons appeared frequently in weekly news and humor magazines and in political posters until his death in 1865. The selection here consists of just a few of the hundreds of Lincoln cartoons collected by Lincoln National Life's Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

### LONG ABRAHAM A LITTLE LONGER

The cartoon at the left celebrates Lincoln's reelection in 1864. Even in this sympathetic cartoon, one of the President's physical characteristics, his great height, is exaggerated.



### LINCOLN'S LAST WARNING

"Now, if you don't come down, I'll cut the Tree from under you."



"Now, Jeffy, when you think you have had enough of this, say so, and I'll leave off."

These two cartoons show President Lincoln threatening and beating his Confederate counterpart, Jefferson Davis. Both cartoonists have utilized well known details from Lincoln's youth, his skill with an ax in the drawing above and his prowess as a wrestler in the lower sketch.



### RUNNING THE "MACHINE"

This poster cartoon, produced by Currier & Ives during Lincoln's campaign for reelection in 1864, offers some caustic criticism of the President and several Cabinet members. Lincoln himself is condemned for his penchant for telling funny stories in Cabinet meetings. Others subjected to the cartoonist's scorn are: (left to right around the back of the table) Treasury Secretary Fessenden, who authorizes additional paper money to finance the war; War Secretary Stanton, who overpublicizes a minor victory; Secretary of State Seward, who is quick to react to criticism; and Navy Secretary Welles, who is simply pictured as inept. The two men in the foreground are profiteering government contractors.





## FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

This kindly portrayal of Lincoln shows him seated on a camp stool and writing on a drum-head in Richmond soon after the capital of the Confederacy had been captured in April, 1865. His message: "All seems well with us." By the time the drawing reached the readers of *Harper's Weekly*, however, the President already had been assassinated.

*The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company was granted permission in 1905 to use Lincoln's name by the President's eldest son, Robert Todd Lincoln. Lincoln National Life has, since 1928, sponsored historical research and programs through the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. This brochure, produced by the library and museum staff, is made available to the public by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company and its local representatives.*



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